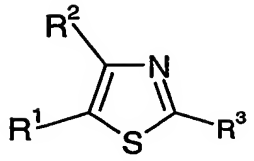
Claims:

1. A compound of formula (I)



I

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts, prodrugs and solvates thereof, in which

R^1 and R^2 independently represent phenyl, thienyl or pyridyl each of which is optionally substituted by one , two or three groups represented by Z;

Z represents a C_{1-6}alkyl group, a C_{1-6}alkoxy group, hydroxy, halo, trifluoromethyl, trifluoromethylthio, trifluoromethoxy, trifluoromethylsulphonyl, nitro, amino, mono or di C_{1-3}alkylamino, mono or di C_{1-3}alkylamido, C_{1-3}alkylsulphonyl, C_{1-3}alkoxycarbonyl, carboxy, cyano, carbamoyl, mono or di C_{1-3}alkyl carbamoyl, sulphamoyl , acetyl or two adjacent carbons may be substituted with the group -O-CH_2-CH_2-O- ; and phenyl optionally substituted by one or more of the following: C_{1-6}alkyl group, trifluoromethyl, a C_{1-6}alkoxy group, trifluoromethoxy, or halo or two adjacent carbons may be substituted with the group -O-CH_2-CH_2-O- ;

and

R^3 represents a group –X-Y-NR^4R^5 in which

R^4 and R^5 independently represent :

a C_{1-6}alkyl group optionally substituted by a C_{1-6}alkoxy group or trifluoromethoxy;

an (amino)C_{1-4}alkyl– group in which the amino is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3}alkyl groups;

a non-aromatic C_{3-15}carbocyclic group which is optionally substituted by a C_{1-3}alkoxyC_{1-3}alkyl group ;

a (C_{3-12}cycloalkyl)C_{1-3}alkyl– group;

a group –$(CH_2)_r$(phenyl)$_s$ in which r is 0,1, 2, 3 or 4, s is 1 when r is 0 otherwise s is 1 or 2 and the phenyl groups are optionally independently substituted by one, two or three groups represented by Z;

naphthyl;

anthracenyl;

a saturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one nitrogen and optionally one of the following : oxygen, sulphur or an additional nitrogen wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3}alkyl groups or benzyl ;

1-adamantylmethyl;

a group $-(CH_2)_t$ Het in which t is 0,1, 2, 3 or 4, and the alkylene chain is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3}alkyl groups and Het represents an aromatic heterocycle optionally substituted by one, two or three groups selected from a C_{1-6}alkyl group; a C_{1-6}alkoxy group, trifluoromethoxy or halo or Het represents a saturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one nitrogen and optionally one of the following : oxygen, sulphur or an additional nitrogen; wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3}alkyl groups, hydroxy or benzyl ;

or R^4 represents H and R^5 is as defined above;

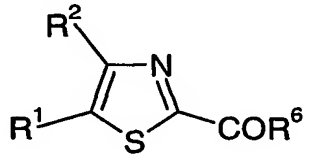
or R^4 and R^5 together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached represent a saturated 5 to 8 membered heterocyclic group containing one nitrogen and optionally one of the following : oxygen, sulphur or an additional nitrogen; wherein the heterocyclic group is optionally substituted by one or more C_{1-3}alkyl groups, hydroxy or benzyl ;

X is CO or SO_2;

Y is absent or represents NH optionally substituted by a C_{1-3}alkyl group;

with the proviso that R^1 and R^2 do not both represent 4-methoxyphenyl and the proviso that when R^1 represents phenyl and R^2 represents phenyl or 4-fluorophenyl, X is CO and Y is absent then the group NR^4R^5 does not represent methyl-[2-[1-(phenylmethyl)-4-piperidinyl]ethyl]amino, methylpiperazino, 2-[1-methyl-4-piperidinyl]ethylamino; or [2-[1-(phenylmethyl)-4-piperidinyl]ethyl]amino.

2. A compound of formula I as represented by formula (II)



II

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts, prodrugs and solvates thereof, in which

R^1 represents phenyl optionally substituted by one or more of the following: C_{1-6}alkyl group, trifluoromethyl, a C_{1-6}alkoxy group, trifluoromethoxy, or halo or two adjacent carbons may be substituted with the group $-O-CH_2-CH_2-O-$;

R^2 represents phenyl optionally substituted by one or more of the following: C_{1-6}alkyl group, trifluoromethyl, a C_{1-6}alkoxy group, trifluoromethoxy, or halo or two adjacent carbons may be substituted with the group -O-CH_2-CH_2-O- ;

and

R^6 represents 1-piperidinylamino, a C_{3-7}cycloalkylamino group which is optionally substituted by a C_{1-3}alkoxyC_{1-3}alkyl group, pyridylamino wherein the pyridyl ring is optionally substituted by one or more of the following: a C_{1-6}alkyl group; a C_{1-6}alkoxy group or trifluoromethoxy; or R^6 represents a C_{1-6}alkylamino group wherein the alkyl chain is optionally substituted by one or more of the following: a C_{1-6}alkoxy group, trifluoromethoxy or morpholino;

with the proviso that when R^1 represents 4-methoxyphenyl and R^2 represents 4-methoxyphenyl then R^6 does not represent 2-(morpholino)ethyl.

3. A compound selected from one or more of the following:

4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid cyclohexylamide;

5-(4-chlorophenyl)-4-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid cyclohexylamide;

4-(4-chlorophenyl)-5-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

5-(4-chlorophenyl)-4-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

4-(4-bromophenyl)-5-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid cyclohexylamide;

4-(4-bromophenyl)-5-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

4,5-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid cyclohexylamide;

4,5-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

4-(4-methoxyphenyl)-5-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid cyclohexylamide;

4,5-bis-(4-methoxyphenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid cyclohexylamide;

4,5-bis-(4-methoxyphenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

5-(7-bromo-2,3-dihydrobenzo[1,4]dioxin-6-yl)-4-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

4-(7-bromo-2,3-dihydrobenzo[1,4]dioxin-6-yl)-5-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid piperidin-1-ylamide;

4,5-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid (2-methoxymethylcyclopentyl)-amide;
4,5-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid pyridin-4-ylamide;
4,5-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid (2-ethoxyethyl)amide; and
4,5-bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid (2-morpholin-4-yl-ethyl)amide
and where applicable, optical isomers, tautomers, stereoisomers and racemates thereof as well as pharmaceutically acceptable salts and solvates thereof.

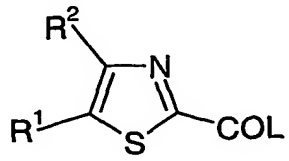
4. A compound of formula I as claimed in any previous claim for use as a medicament.

5. A pharmaceutical formulation comprising a compound of formula I, as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3 and a pharmaceutically acceptable adjuvant, diluent or carrier.

6. Use of a compound of formula I, as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3 including the compounds of the proviso in claim 1 in the preparation of a medicament for the treatment or prophylaxis of conditions associated with obesity.

7. A method of treating obesity, psychiatric disorders such as psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorders, anxiety, anxio-depressive disorders, depression, cognitive disorders, memory disorders, obsessive-compulsive disorders, anorexia, bulimia, attention disorders like ADHD, epilepsy, and related conditions, neurological disorders such as dementia, neurological disorders (e.g. Multiple Sclerosis), Parkinson's Disease, Huntington's Chorea and Alzheimer's Disease, immune, cardiovascular, reproductive and endocrine disorders, septic shock, diseases related to the respiratory and gastrointestinal systems (e.g. diarrhea), and extended abuse, addiction and/or relapse indications, e.g. treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) dependence and/or treating drug (nicotine, ethanol, cocaine, opiates, etc) withdrawal symptoms comprising administering a pharmacologically effective amount of a compound as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3 including the compounds of the proviso in claim 1 to a patient in need thereof.

8. A process for the preparation of compounds of formula I as claimed in claim 1 in which X is CO comprising reacting a compound of formula III



III

in which R^1, and R^2 are as previously defined and L represents hydroxy, alkoxy or halo with an amine of formula IV

$$R^4R^5NYH_2 \qquad IV$$

in which Y, R^4 and R^5 are as previously defined in an inert solvent in the presence of a coupling agent and optionally in the presence of a catalyst at a temperature in the range of - 25°C to 150°C.

9. Intermediates of formula II selected from one or more of the following:
4-(4-Chlorophenyl)-5-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid ethyl ester
5-(4-Chlorophenyl)-4-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid ethyl ester
4-(4-Bromophenyl)-5-phenyl-thiazole-2-carboxylic acid ethyl ester
4,5-Bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid ethyl ester
5-(7-Bromo-2,3-dihydrobenzo[1,4]dioxin-6-yl)-4-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid ethyl ester
4-(7-Bromo-2,3-dihydrobenzo[1,4]dioxin-6-yl)-5-phenylthiazole-2-carboxylic acid ethyl ester
5-(4-Chloro-phenyl)-4-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)-thiazole-2-carboxylic acid
4-(4-Chloro-phenyl)-5-(2,4-dichlorophenyl)-thiazole-2-carboxylic acid and
4,5-Bis-(4-chlorophenyl)thiazole-2-carboxylic acid .

10. A compound as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3 combined with another therapeutic agent that is useful in the treatment of disorders associated with the development and progress of obesity such as hypertension, hyperlipidaemias, dyslipidaemias, diabetes and atherosclerosis.